

Wasatch County may bond for improvements on tabernacle

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HEBER CITY. — Heber City's plans to remodel the Wasatch Stake Tabernacle hit a snag last week when the council learned that a bond election will be required although the project is not expected to increase taxes. Funds budgeted for capital improvements should be able to cover loan payments, according to Heber City Mayor

Gordon Mendenhall.

The council decided to hire a professional pollster to find out how Heber City residents feel about taking on a loan of over \$300,000 to remodel the structure. If the results are favorable, there would be a bond election.

The councilmen expressed concern about spending approximately \$1,500 for a bond election that may not pass and chose to spend a few

hundred dollars on a poll first.

When the city purchased the tabernacle from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints over 20 years ago, it agreed to keep up the building and grounds, and that the building will never house commercial activities.

Mayor Mendenhall said approximately \$175,000 has been spent caring for the building during the past 22 years. "It's just a make-

work project," he said.

If the bond election passes, the tabernacle will be remodeled to house the city offices, a museum and a meeting hall.

City employees have become crowded in the present city offices, on First North. Furthermore, according to Eleanor Nelson, City Recorder, the present facility is in violation of fire and other regulations. Either the present office building will need to be expanded

and renovated to meet legal requirements or a new facility will have to be built.

Zions First National Bank has agreed to provide a construction loan. The Farmers Home Loan Administration has given preliminary approval to financing the project after construction is completed.

The project designer, George Olson, Olson and Harris Architects, has submitted preliminary plans,

pointing out that the building will be adapted for contemporary needs but the character of the building will be maintained.

Tourism promoters in Wasatch County have indicated the rehabilitated tabernacle could also become a tourist attraction, especially a museum. The historical building was built in 1887 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

